

**Assembly Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 35**

**Introduced by Assembly Member Blakeslee**  
**(Coauthor: Assembly Member Ma)**  
(Coauthor: Senator Maldonado)

February 25, 2009

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 35—Relative to Viral Hepatitis Awareness Day.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 35, as introduced, Blakeslee. Viral Hepatitis Awareness Day.

This measure would declare May 19, 2009, to be Viral Hepatitis Awareness Day in California.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Over 520 million people worldwide are chronically  
2 infected with viral hepatitis, and of those, over 5 million people  
3 in the United States are infected with hepatitis C and 1.5 million  
4 with hepatitis B; and  
5 WHEREAS, The federal Centers for Disease Control and  
6 Prevention estimate that approximately 30,000 new cases of  
7 hepatitis C infection and 60,000 new cases of hepatitis B infection  
8 occur annually in the United States, with 15,000 Americans dying  
9 of viral hepatitis each year; and  
10 WHEREAS, Hepatitis can lead to liver disease, cirrhosis, liver  
11 cancer, and liver failure. Liver cancer from hepatitis B and C kills  
12 more people in California than anywhere else in the country; and

1 WHEREAS, Persons infected with the hepatitis virus are often  
2 unaware of their status for as long as 10 to 20 years and are  
3 unknowingly vectors for continued spread of the virus; and

4 WHEREAS, Although prevention of hepatitis B and C is  
5 possible, and some treatments are available, many persons at risk  
6 or affected by these conditions are neither tested nor treated due  
7 to lack of knowledge or access to care; and

8 WHEREAS, Therapies for hepatitis C have improved so that  
9 40 percent to 80 percent of treated patients attain sustained viral  
10 elimination, and hepatitis B can be prevented with vaccinations;  
11 and

12 WHEREAS, The cost of prevention can be as low as \$60 for  
13 vaccination for hepatitis B and even less for educational efforts to  
14 prevent all types of viral hepatitis, as opposed to a cost of \$750,000  
15 for liver transplantation; and

16 WHEREAS, Estimates of the annual costs of hepatitis A in the  
17 United States have ranged from \$300 million to \$488.8 million in  
18 1997 dollars. A recent analysis estimated economic costs of \$133.5  
19 million during the lifetime of a single age group of children.

20 WHEREAS, Hepatitis awareness education campaigns and  
21 accessible screening for hepatitis B and C, along with appropriate  
22 treatment, can reduce the damage from hepatitis B and C viral  
23 infection to individuals and to our community, financially as well  
24 as physically and emotionally; and

25 WHEREAS, A study published in the January 6, 2009, issue of  
26 the journal *Annals of Internal Medicine* concluded that health care  
27 personnel in settings outside hospitals failed to follow basic  
28 infection control practices and exposed more than 60,000 patients  
29 in the United States to hepatitis B and C.

30 WHEREAS, May 19, 2009, will be the fifth annual World  
31 Hepatitis Awareness Day, a global day of awareness sponsored  
32 by the World Hepatitis Alliance. The theme, “Am I Number 12?”  
33 highlights the fact that one in 12 people, globally, suffer from  
34 hepatitis and what individual governments can do to prevent this;  
35 now, therefore, be it

36 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*  
37 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature of the State of California  
38 declares May 19, 2009, to be Viral Hepatitis Awareness Day in  
39 California; and be it further

- 1     *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit
- 2     sufficient copies of this resolution to the author for distribution.

O